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Newsletter

Message from ECOO Vice President

Dear colleagues, dear members of ECOO,

Collecting relevant data from each member country is one of ECOO's goals for the near future.

Data collected from one country can be used to support our profession in another country, as it seeks to develop towards ECOO's model of optometry and optics.

Several recent examples show how relevant these facts are, as you know. Member organisations need information from other countries, in order to be able to lobby their national authorities. But they need the information quickly (in 'real time'). Unfortunately it takes time to circulate questionnaires, wait for replies and then analyse the replies.

Your Executive Committee believes that the best way to collect data is via ECOO's online platform: www.ecoo.info. Using ECOO's website is easy, convenient, safe and accessible for each member country. Access to the *Extranet* section of ECOO's website of is available from our webmaster, Dominic Ramspeck. For further details, please contact the Secretary General.

We can be sure that the catalogue of questions will grow with the needs of our member organisations. Topics that we have not included in the past can be added by request. If your organisation wants to add information, which could be important for the development of optics and optometry within Europe, please let us know.

Thank you for your cooperation!



Armin Duddek
Vice-President ECOO

Latest News from ECOO

The President and Executive Committee of ECOO continue to be busy, developing various initiatives announce at previous meetings of the General Assembly.

Position papers are being finalised on a range of subjects, including the contents of an eye examination, vision and driving, ultra-violet radiation and the eyes. The possibility of cooperating with industry on informing the public on how best to purchase spectacles and contact lenses is also being considered. In the meantime, ECOO has continued to issue press releases on subjects designed to interest the general media, with a view to enhancing ECOO's image as a source of information. Please see our website: www.ecoo.info

The Executive Committee met in London on 31 July-1 August and, among other things, held a wide-ranging debate on the future of ECOO. More details will be sent to member organisations soon; and the Executive Committee will make a presentation to the General Assembly at its next meeting on 17-18 October in Budapest.

In preparation for the General Assembly, member organisations will also receive new proposals for calculating their subscriptions to ECOO to replace the current system.

The General Assembly will also be asked to update ECOO's 'constitution' on the basis of proposals from the Executive Committee. The constitution consists of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of ECOO as a company limited by guarantee and established in the UK.



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Abdullah Aydin Re-Elected

Abdullah Aydin has been re-elected as the President of Turkish Association for Optical and Optometric Professions (TAOOP) for another three years.

Serdar Çaldıran continues as the Association's Secretary General.

Executive Committee Member Mr. Cenk Yoleri was elected as the new External Relations Officer of TAOOP. He will be responsible for the exchange of information between European colleagues and the Turkish Association and will attend as a delegate the next meeting of ECOO in October in Budapest.

TAOOP held its Annual General Assembly on 26 June 2009 in Istanbul.

A Very Successful Sunglasses Campaign



Last April the Cyprus Optical Association (a member of ECOO) launched a campaign via the media to alert people of the need to wear sunglasses of good quality and of the dangers of exposing the body and mainly the eyes to the sun and, in particular, ultra-violet (UV) radiation. The campaign explained that the ozone layer has lost most of its absorbing power and stressed the fact that UV radiation is cumulative, possibly linked to the frequent incidences of conjunctivitis, cataract, macular degeneration and keratitis. The main message was to buy sunglasses from optical retail outlets, in order to be sure of the full protective quality of the lenses.

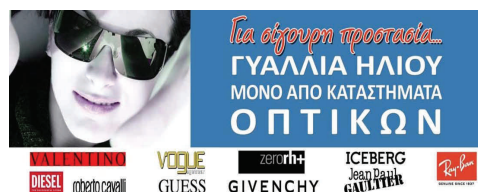
The final stage of the campaign started at the beginning of August and will finish in October with giant posters on all main roads. The posters are already in place on all roads

World Sight Day fixed for 8 October 2009

Optometrists around the world will again join forces in October to help address the needs of the estimated 670 million men, women and children globally who are blind or vision impaired simply because they do not have access to an eye exam and a pair of glasses.

Oct 8 has been designated as World Sight Day, an initiative of Vision 2020: The Right to Sight, and is supported by the World Health Organization, the International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness and other organizations with the shared goal of eliminating avoidable blindness by the year 2020. Optometrists globally will take part in the World Sight Day Challenge by donating their eye exam fees for a day in October, making a personal contribution or encouraging staff and patients to give the gift of sight to those without access to even basic eye care services.

In many developing countries there are not enough trained eye care personnel and there is insufficient infrastructure to support desperately needed eye care services. Optometry Giving Sight, the organizer of the World Sight Day Challenge, funds the solution by supporting programs that offer not only eye exams and glasses but establish vision centres and train local eye care professionals in communities with little or no access to eye care services. Optometry Giving Sight is the only global fundraising initiative that specifically targets the prevention of blindness and impaired vision due to uncorrected refractive error.



between main cities and resorts. The high cost of this final stage was possible with financial support of most of the importers and distributors of sunglasses and the understanding of Super Ad that did all the placing at a very reasonable charge.

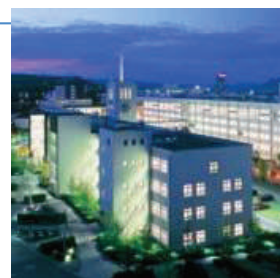
By the end of 2009, Optometry Giving Sight will have distributed \$3 million through its partners to help screen and provide basic eye care services to more than 1.7 million people, train 1,550 mid-level eye care personnel and create 101 vision centres/optical workshops. The funds will be directed to projects in Sri Lanka, Southern Africa, East Timor, Latin America, Indigenous Australia, Papua New Guinea, as well other parts of the world.

It can cost just \$5 to provide an eye examination, a pair of glasses and residual training to local staff in countries where eye care services are few. This alone could be enough to save someone from the injustices of poverty, allowing children to go to school and parents to provide for their families. Optometry Giving Sight guarantees that 85% of all funds raised by optometrists and their patients go directly to programs that give sight to those most in need.

For more information or to register to take the World Sight Day Challenge, go to www.givingsight.org or call 888-OGS-GIVE. You will receive a free kit with World Sight Day Challenge materials that contains everything you need to create a great practice and community event.

(Primary Care Optometry News online 22 July 2009)

Next VDCO Meeting on 24–27 September 2009 in Jena



University of Applied Sciences Jena
(photo Reuter Jena)

The next scientific and clinical meeting of the German Association of Contact Lens Specialists and Optometrists (VDCO) will be held at the University of Applied Sciences (FH) in the City of Jena, Germany.

During three days national and international well known speakers will present more than 40 scientific and clinical lectures and 12 practical workshops about contact lenses and the anterior eye.



For more information please contact: www.optometrie.de

European Academy 2010 Copenhagen - call for abstracts!

The European Academy of Optometry and Optics will hold its second annual conference in Copenhagen, Denmark, 15-16 May 2010.



This meeting will be of interest to professionals from the fields of optometry, optics, vision science and other related areas of work. It will provide:

The Academy is now calling for Abstracts and Workshop Proposals for its academic and research sessions which may focus on core eye-health topics, OR the specific themes for 2010:

- Education – ‘revalidation for health: continued fitness to practice for eye-health professionals’, will consider the issues and challenges relating to the developing requirements for revalidation and reaccreditation that face the Academy’s stakeholders as health-care professionals; and
- Research – ‘paediatrics to geriatrics: research for all eye-ages’, will focus on research in relation to paediatric and geriatric eye health.

These given themes will remain at the centre of the academic and research sessions but are not the limit of it and the Academy is seeking a broad range of submissions.

- an opportunity for Academy Stakeholder and members to meet and share knowledge, ideas and questions; and
- an opportunity for professionals to access a wide range of relevant, leading edge materials capable of informing their clinical practice or work as researchers and educators
- the opportunity to meet practitioners, educators and researchers from related disciplines across Europe in an environment that facilitates discussion, exchange of views and proactive network development relevant to the individual.

For further information, please download the *Guidelines for Submissions* and the *Call for Abstracts* from the Academy’s website: www.eaoo.info or contact Michael.Bowen@college-optometrists.org (telephone +44 (0) 20 7766 4374).

The closing date for submission of abstracts is Friday 15 January 2010.

Regulators survey use of Portugal Agreement on mobility

Health Professionals Crossing Borders (HPCB) is an informal European network of healthcare regulators and professional bodies. The members of the network cooperate on issues arising from the increasing mobility of healthcare professionals within the European single market.

HPCB is inviting healthcare regulators to complete an online survey on the implementation of the Portugal Agreement. Individual responses to the survey will not be made publicly available and will be entirely anonymised in the presentation of the results. The survey is designed to build on the consensus achieved by the Portugal Agreement and to establish baseline evidence to inform HPCB's continuing work. More information about the survey can be found at: <http://www.hpcb.eu/news/>

The focus of the Portugal Agreement is the exchange of information about health professionals and patients' mobility, in order to maintain the safety of patients. (See below.) The Agreement was made in Lisbon on 8 April 2007. It consists of the following principles.

AGREEMENT 1 – Identifying shared principles of regulation

- a) Competent authorities should ensure that patient safety is of over-riding importance within their model of professional regulation.
- b) The pursuit of safe and high quality practice by health professionals should shape the continued development of health regulation across Europe.
- c) Competent authorities should identify common or shared concepts and values of healthcare regulation through a series of focused European level discussions.
- d) Competent authorities should collectively consider how the five principles of good regulation – accountability, transparency, proportionality, consistency, targeting – may contribute to the effective development of healthcare regulation in Europe, through a series of European level discussions

AGREEMENT 2 – Transparent and accessible healthcare regulation

- a) Competent authorities should run a website signposted or accessible via the www.healthregulation.org website and/or http://ec.europa.eu/internal_market/qualifications/compauth_en.htm
- b) Competent authorities will share experience in the development of web-based information and publicly transparent lists of registered professionals and identify good practice.
- c) Competent authorities should work to develop real-time web-based publicly searchable lists of registered professionals.
- d) Competent authorities should work towards making all notifications of disciplinary hearings and decisions public, where legally possible.
- e) Competent authorities will continue to adopt and implement the European template for a Certificate of Current Professional Status, as appropriate, as agreed with the Edinburgh Agreement.
- f) Competent authorities will continue to work towards adopting the HPCB Memorandum of Understanding on case by case and proactive information exchange.
- g) Competent authorities will continue to support the development of the European Commission's internal market information system (IMI) and will utilise this information exchange tool in accordance with the provisions for administrative cooperation contained within directive 2005/36/EC

AGREEMENT 3 – Competence assurance of European healthcare professionals

- a) Competent authorities will identify best practice from existing competence assurance and performance enhancement initiatives from across the globe.
- b) Competent authorities will undertake an audit of all existing or proposed competence assurance and performance enhancement initiatives within the EEA.
- c) Competent authorities should, where possible, work to develop appropriate competence assurance and performance enhancement initiatives based on global good practice
- d) Competent authorities should develop appropriate information exchange tools to provide assurance to other competent authorities of current practitioner performance competence when practitioners seek to practise in other member states.
- e) All competent authorities should take proactive steps to make new registrants familiar with the relevant professional standards, codes and guidance on registration that apply in their jurisdiction
- f) All competent authorities should make their standards, codes and guidance publicly available.

Essilor extends support for homeless vision charity



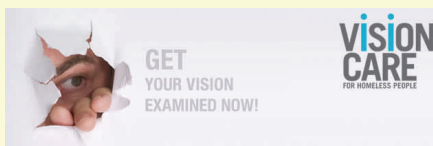
Essilor has pledged to extend its support to Vision Care for Homeless People until the end of 2010, helping the charity offer a free spectacle service to hundreds of homeless people. The Bristol-based company has supported the charity by providing lenses, glazing services and financial aid since 2007.

Essilor UK managing director, Marc Tersigni said: "We have much praise for the management and volunteers who work for the charity. Through their dedication, hard work and commitment to the cause, the project has gone from strength to strength.

"Essilor recognises the challenges that charities face when fundraising and is pleased to continue supporting such a worthy cause."

Vision Care for Homeless People runs its service from three centres, two in London and one in Birmingham. Since launching the charity has helped hundreds of homeless people with their eye care needs, issuing prescriptions of up to -16.00d.

The optical charity is currently seeking volunteer optometrists and dispensing opticians for its Snow Hill, Birmingham and Commercial Street, London centre. For more information on volunteering, please email early@visioncarecharity.org



(Optometry Today 7 August 2009)

Thomas Lewis Honoured in USA

Dr Thomas L. Lewis, President of Salus University in the United States of America, has been honoured with the first ever Lifetime Achievement Award by ASCO (the Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry) in recognition of "his 30 years of outstanding contributions to ASCO, initially as Dean and President of PCO, and now as President of Salus University." The award also recognizes Dr Lewis' leadership during the twenty years he served as a member of the ASCO Board of Directors.



L/R: Dr Arol Augsburg, President Illinois College of Optometry; Dr Melvin Shipp, ASCO President; Dr Lewis; Dr John Amos, President, UAB School of Optometry, and ASCO Executive Director Mr Marty Wall

(Salutations Newsletter of Salus University Jul-Aug 2009)

Intra-vitreous anti-VEGF improves visual acuity, reduces foveal thickness in inflammatory diseases

Intravitreal bevacizumab injection yielded positive long-term clinical and visual outcomes in eyes with various inflammatory ocular diseases, according to a study.

"Anti-VEGF treatment may be superior to previous therapies, with an improvement of more than two lines in [best corrected visual acuity] and significant foveal flattening in a wide variety of inflammatory ocular neovascularization with no major complications," the study authors said.

The retrospective multicenter case study included 99 eyes of 96 patients who underwent intravitreal injection of Avastin (bevacizumab, Genentech). Mean patient age was 39 years. Primary outcome measures were best corrected logMAR visual acuity and decrease in central foveal thickness at 6, 12, 18 and 24 months after treatment. Optical coherence tomography was used to measure central foveal thickness.

Thirty-three eyes received 2.5 mg bevacizumab injections; 66 eyes received 1.25 mg injections.

At baseline, mean logMAR BCVA was 0.65 (20/90), and mean central foveal thickness was 338 μ m. At 6 months, mean BCVA was 0.42 (20/53), and mean central foveal thickness was 239 μ m.

At 12 months, mean BCVA was 0.39 (20/49), and mean central foveal thickness was 241 μ m. At 18 months, mean BCVA was 0.40 (20/50), and mean central foveal thickness was 261 μ m. At 24 months, mean BCVA was 0.34 (20/44), and mean central foveal thickness was 265 μ m.

"Three eyes developed submacular fibrosis and one eye submacular haemorrhage," the authors said.

(Am J Ophthalmol. 2009; 148(2):310-316 in Primary Care Optometry News online August 8, 2009)

Death of Pat Cummings of Vistakon

Statement from Dave Brown, PRESIDENT, VISTAKON® Americas:

"It is with great sadness that I inform you that Pat Cummings, O.D., F.A.A.O., VISTAKON® America's Region Vice President, Professional Development Group was killed in a plane crash Saturday in St. Johns County, Florida. Pat joined VISTAKON® in December 2003 bringing with him significant clinical and organizational leadership experience to the organization.



A graduate of Pacific University's College of Optometry, he was a member of a private group practice in Sheridan, Wyoming. Pat served as a consulting optometrist at the Veteran's Administration Hospital in Sheridan for over 20 years and was on staff at the Sheridan County Memorial Hospital. He also served as an adjunct clinical faculty member for Pacific University's College of Optometry.

Pat was also a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, a member of the Aerospace Medical Association and a charter member of the American Optometric Association's Contact Lens & Cornea Section and its Sports Vision Section. He was elected to the Board of Trustees of the American Optometric Association in 1994 before and served as its 81st President in 2002-2003.

He was recognized by several civic and professional organizations. The Sheridan College presented the Golden Opportunity Outstanding Alumni Award to him in 1998. Pat also was recognized twice as the Wyoming Optometrist of the Year and as the Great Western Optometrist in 2000.

Pat was an extraordinary man, widely respected and admired by his colleagues and peers. He will be greatly missed by those of us who knew him."

Statement from AOA President Randy Brooks, O.D:

"Pat Cummings was skilled doctor, a gifted leader of the AOA, a powerful voice for the profession in his work at Vistakon, and a tireless champion for public health ... he was my good friend. My heart goes out to his family and to all within the optometric family who mourn his loss and remember his many contributions. We have lost a great leader and a truly remarkable human being"

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Global Health and Innovation Conference April 2010

GH/Innovate 2010
Global Health & Innovation Conference
Presented by Unite For Sight
Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut, USA
Saturday, April 17 - Sunday, April 18, 2010

Registration Now Open (Early Bird Registration Rate): <http://www.ghinnovate.org/>

Call for Abstracts: Submit an abstract online at <http://www.ghinnovate.org/>.
The first deadline for abstract submission is August 15. The final abstract deadline is September 20.

200 speakers, including keynote addresses by Seth Godin, Jeffrey Sachs and Sonia Sachs. Social innovation sessions by CEOs and Directors of Acumen Fund, Partners in Health, WaterPartners, Save The Children, HealthStore Foundation, and many others.

The Global Health & Innovation Conference convenes more than 2,200 participants from 55 countries. The conference challenges students, public health professionals, educators, doctors, scientists, lawyers, universities, corporations, nonprofits, and others, to develop innovative, effective solutions to achieve global goals.

Keynote Speakers will include the following:

"Using the Power of Stories and Tribes to Spread Your Messages and Change the World," Seth Godin, MBA, Agent of Change; New York Times Bestselling Author of Tribes: We Need You to Lead Us; Founder, Squidoo.com

Jeffrey Sachs, PhD, Director of Earth Institute at Columbia University; Quetelet Professor of Sustainable Development, Professor of Health Policy and Management, Columbia University; Special Advisor to Secretary-General of the United Nations Ban Ki-moon

Sonia Ehrlich Sachs, MD, MPH, Health Coordinator, Millennium Village Project.



Newsletter

The newsletter will be sent to members by e-mail or fax and we want to make sure it is received by every member:

Are your details up to date?

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ECOO member state organisations should send relevant news and information which is of interest to all ECOO members to the ECOO office. Please email to: charlotteverity@aop.org.uk